

Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) Meeting Minutes 12/30/15

Meeting was called to order by Charlie Pyle at 6:40PM in attendance were: Stewart Brock, John Thalhauser, and Nick Wilder, Henry Kunhardt joined the meeting at 6:55PM

The purpose of the meeting was for the BAC to continue our discussion of the proposed budget. Charlie informed the BAC that there will be a meeting with the Board of Selectmen, on 1/11/16 at a time to be determined

Charlie asked for a sense of the Board regarding across the board employee pay increases. It is the sense of the board that no increase should be proposed.

Discussion moved to the budget item related to a pay increase for the Town Clerk/Tax collector. IN the current proposed budget, there is a pay increase. Discussion occurred that focused on the Warrant article and the BAC felt the language in the Warrant did not support a pay raise at this time, but that it allowed for discussion and opportunity for raises in the future. It was felt that for 2015-2016 the salary was as stated in the Warrant. Charlie will follow-up with to get the specific language

Discussion about the Police Department staffing model reflected an overall support of the recommended model with the 91.5 hours of patrol time being OK and future evaluation of hours will determine if more or less hours are needed. The budget documents dated 12/30/15 have a \$15,000 increase that no-one could identify where it came from, and Charlie will follow-up with Jamie to get clarification

Ambulance service: The sense of the BAC is to support the ongoing evaluation of ambulance service options by the Fire Department. Discussion also included a recommendation to include the Town Administrator in order to assist in the evaluation. A question for the Fire Chief was do we know if there are additional budget shortfalls projected for the future.

Solid Waste: Discussion of the RFP results lead to a recommendation that the Town should negotiate with one of the vendors based on an assessment of the submitted bids, there is wide variation in various line items, and John suggested that we could leverage that as a means to negotiate down. Also, the sense of the BAC was that moving to a single stream would not be a good decision.

Legal: Discussion of historical trends for legal excluding the recent budget year highlighted a possible opportunity to lower the legal budget line. The BAC recognizes the need to adequately fund the legal line, but felt that there is some room to reduce it and recommended to do so.

Health Insurance: The BAC would like the town to continue to assess and evaluate health insurance options.

General Building: The BAC would like to get a list of drivers and planned projects to be in a position to better understand the budget

Highway: Discussion focused on the salt/sand budget lines. Discussion of historical budget request as well as spending trends has lead to a request to re-evaluate this area. It was noted that at Town Meeting last year, there was an amendment from the floor that added money to the budget for sanding needs. Thus, the BAC felt that the budget request should be based on the pre town meeting budget as well as trends, and would request that lowering this be considered.

Budget Overall: The Budget Advisory Committee generally feels good with the proposed budget, but would like recommend that an attempt to lower the budget, at the margins be considered.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM

The next meeting will be 1/11/16 with the Board of Selectmen

Minutes respectfully submitted by Stewart Brock